

2008-Eckhart Tolle Oprah A New Earth Audiobook Podcast Chapter09

[Speaker 1] (0:00 - 39:18)

CHAPTER NINE YOUR INNER PURPOSE As soon as you rise above mere survival, the question of meaning and purpose becomes of paramount importance in your life. Many people feel caught up in the routines of daily living, which seem to deprive their life of significance. Some believe life is passing them by, or has passed them by already.

Others feel severely restricted by the demands of their job and supporting a family, or by their financial or living situation. Some are consumed by acute stress, others by acute boredom. Some are lost in frantic doing, others are lost in stagnation.

Many people long for the freedom and expansion that prosperity promises. Others already enjoy the relative freedom that comes with prosperity, and discover that even that is not enough to endow their lives with meaning. There is no substitute for finding true purpose.

But the true or primary purpose of your life cannot be found on the outer level. It does not concern what you do, but what you are, that is to say, your state of consciousness. So the most important thing to realize is this.

Your life has an inner purpose and an outer purpose. Inner purpose concerns being and is primary. Outer purpose concerns doing and is secondary.

While this book speaks mainly of your inner purpose, this chapter and the next will also address the question of how to align outer purpose and inner purpose in your life. Inner and outer, however, are so intertwined that it is almost impossible to speak of one without referring to the other. Your inner purpose is to awaken.

It is as simple as that. You share that purpose with every other person on the planet, because it is the purpose of humanity. Your inner purpose is an essential part of the purpose of the whole, the universe and its emerging intelligence.

Your outer purpose can change over time. It varies greatly from person to person. Finding and living in alignment with the inner purpose is the foundation for fulfilling your outer purpose.

It is the basis for true success. Without that alignment, you can still achieve certain things through effort, struggle, determination and sheer hard work or cunning, but there is no joy in such endeavor, and it invariably ends in some form of suffering. Awakening is a shift in consciousness in which thinking and awareness separate.

For most people it is not an event but a process they undergo. Even those rare beings

who experience a sudden, dramatic and seemingly irreversible awakening will still go through a process in which the new state of consciousness gradually flows into and transforms everything they do, and so becomes integrated into their lives. Awareness Instead of being lost in your thinking, when you are awake you recognize yourself as the awareness behind it.

Thinking then ceases to be a self-serving, autonomous activity that takes possession of you and runs your life. Awareness takes over from thinking. Instead of being in charge of your life, thinking becomes the servant of awareness.

Awareness is conscious connection with universal intelligence. Another word for it is presence, consciousness without thought. The initiation of the awakening process is an act of grace.

You cannot make it happen, nor can you prepare yourself for it or accumulate credits towards it. There isn't a tidy sequence of logical steps that leads towards it, although the mind would love that. You don't have to become worthy first.

It may come to the sinner before it comes to the saint, but not necessarily. That's why Jesus associated with all kinds of people, not just the irrespectable ones. There's nothing you can do about awakening.

Whatever you do will be the ego trying to add awakening or enlightenment to itself as its most prized possession and thereby making itself more important and bigger. Instead of awakening, you add the concept of awakening to your mind, or the mental image of what an awakened or enlightened person is like, and then try to live up to that image. Living up to an image that you have of yourself or that other people have of you is inauthentic living, another unconscious role the ego plays.

There's nothing you can do about awakening. If it has either already happened or not yet happened, how can it be the primary purpose of your life? Does not purpose imply that you can do something about it?

Only the first awakening, the first glimpse of consciousness without thought, happens by grace, without any doing on your part. If you find this book incomprehensible or meaningless, it has not yet happened to you. If something within you responds to it, however, if you somehow recognize the truth in it, it means the process of awakening has begun.

Once it has done so, it cannot be reversed, although it can be delayed by the ego. For some people, the reading of this book will initiate the awakening process. For others, the function of this book is to help them recognize that they have already begun to awaken, and to intensify and accelerate the process.

Another function of this book is to help people recognize the ego within them whenever

it tries to regain control and obscure the arising awareness. For some, the awakening happens as they suddenly become aware of the kinds of thoughts they habitually think, especially persistent negative thoughts that they may have been identified with all of their lives. Suddenly, there is an awareness that is aware of thought, but is not part of it.

What is the relationship between awareness and thinking? Awareness is the space in which thoughts exist when that space has become conscious of itself. Once you have had a glimpse of awareness or presence, you know it firsthand.

It is no longer just a concept in your mind. You can then make a conscious choice to be present rather than to indulge in useless thinking. You can invite presence into your life, that is to say, make space.

With the grace of awakening comes responsibility. You can either try to go on as if nothing has happened, or you can see its significance and recognize the arising of awareness as the most important thing that can happen to you. Opening yourself to the emerging consciousness and bringing its light into this world then becomes the primary purpose of your life.

I want to know the mind of God, Einstein said. The rest are details. What is the mind of God?

Consciousness. What does it mean to know the mind of God? To be aware.

What are the details? Your outer purpose and whatever happens outwardly. So while you are perhaps still waiting for something significant to happen in your life, you may not realize that the most significant thing that can happen to a human being has already happened within you, the beginning of the separation process of thinking and awareness.

Many people who are going through the early stages of the awakening process are no longer certain what their outer purpose is. What drives the world no longer drives them. Seeing the madness of our civilization so clearly, they may feel somewhat alienated from the culture around them.

Some feel that they inhabit a no-man's land between two worlds. They are no longer run by the ego, yet the arising awareness has not yet become fully integrated into their lives. Inner and outer purpose have not merged.

A Dialogue on Inner Purpose The following dialogue condenses numerous conversations I have had with people who were looking for their true life purpose. Something is true when it resonates with and expresses your innermost being, when it is in alignment with your inner purpose. This is why I am directing their attention to their inner and primary purpose first.

I don't know exactly what it is, but I want some change in my life. I want expansion. I want to be doing something meaningful, and, yes, I want prosperity and the freedom that comes with it.

I want to do something significant, something that makes a difference in the world. But if you ask me what exactly I want, I would have to say that I don't know. Can you help me find my life purpose?

Your purpose is to sit here and talk to me, because that's where you are and that's what you're doing, until you get up and do something else. Then that becomes your purpose. So my purpose is to sit in my office for the next thirty years until I retire or get laid off?

You are not in your office now, so that's not your purpose. When you do sit in your office and do whatever you do, then that is your purpose. Not for the next thirty years, but for now.

I think there's some misunderstanding here. For you, purpose means what you are doing now. For me, it means having an overall aim in life, something big and significant that gives meaning to what I do, something that makes a difference.

Shuffling papers in the office is not it, I know that. As long as you are unaware of being, you will seek meaning only within the dimension of doing and of future, that is to say, the dimension of time. And whatever meaning or fulfillment you find will dissolve or turn out to have been a deception.

Invariably, it will be destroyed by time. Any meaning we find on that level is true only relatively and temporarily. For example, if caring for your children gives meaning to your life, what happens to that meaning when they don't need you and perhaps don't even listen to you anymore?

Meaning to your life? You depend on others being worse off than yourself so that your life can continue to be meaningful and you can feel good about yourself. If the desire to excel, win or succeed at this or that activity provides you with meaning, what if you never win or your winning streak comes to an end one day, as it will?

You would then have to look to your imagination or memories, a very unsatisfactory place to bring some meager meaning into your life. Making it, in whatever field, is only meaningful as long as there are thousands or millions of others who don't make it. So you need other human beings to fail so that your life can have meaning.

I'm not saying here that helping others, caring for your children or striving for excellence in whatever field are not worthwhile things to do. For many people, they are an important part of their outer purpose. But outer purpose alone is always relative, unstable and impermanent.

This does not mean that you should not be engaged in those activities. It means you should connect them to your inner, primary purpose, so that a deeper meaning flows into what you do. Without living in alignment with your primary purpose, whatever purpose you come up with, even if it is to create heaven on earth, will be of the ego or become destroyed by time.

Sooner or later, it will lead to suffering. If you ignore your inner purpose, no matter what you do, even if it looks spiritual, the ego will creep into how you do it, and so the means will corrupt the end. The common saying, the road to hell is paved with good intentions, points to this truth.

In other words, not your aims or your actions are primary, but the state of consciousness out of which they come. Fulfilling your primary purpose is laying the foundation for a new reality, a new earth. Once that foundation is there, your external purpose becomes charged with spiritual power, because your aims and intentions will be one with the evolutionary impulse of the universe.

The separation of thinking and awareness, which lies at the core of your primary purpose, happens through the negation of time. We are not speaking here, of course, of the use of time for practical purposes, such as making an appointment or planning a trip. We are not speaking of clock time, but of psychological time, which is the mind's deep-seated habit of seeking the fullness of life in the future where it cannot be found, and ignoring the only point of access to it, the present moment.

When you look upon what you do or where you are as the main purpose of your life, you negate time. This is enormously empowering. The negation of time in what you do also provides the link between your inner and outer purposes, between being and doing.

When you negate time, you negate the ego. Whatever you do, you will be doing extraordinarily well, because the doing itself becomes the focal point of your attention. Your doing then becomes a channel through which consciousness enters this world.

This means there is quality in what you do, even in the most simple action, like turning the pages in the phone book or walking across the room. The main purpose for turning the pages is to turn the pages. The secondary purpose is to find a phone number.

The main purpose for walking across the room is to walk across the room. The secondary purpose is to pick up a book at the other end, and the moment you pick up the book, that becomes your main purpose. You may remember the paradox of time we mentioned earlier.

Whatever you do takes time, and yet it is always now. So while your inner purpose is to negate time, your outer purpose necessarily involves future and so could not exist without time. But it is always secondary.

Whenever you become anxious or stressed, outer purpose has taken over and you lost sight of your inner purpose. You have forgotten that your state of consciousness is primary. All else, secondary.

Would living like this not stop me from looking to achieve something great? My fear is that I will remain stuck with doing little things for the rest of my life, things that are of no consequence. I am afraid of never rising above mediocrity, never daring to achieve anything great, not fulfilling my potential.

The great arises out of small things that are honored and cared for. Everybody's life really consists of small things. Greatness is a mental abstraction and a favorite fantasy of the ego.

The paradox is that the foundation for greatness is honoring the small things of the present moment instead of pursuing the idea of greatness. The present moment is always small in the sense that it is always simple, but concealed within it lies the greatest power. Like the atom, it is one of the smallest things yet contains enormous power.

Only when you align yourself with the present moment do you have access to that power. Or it may be more true to say that it then has access to you and through you to this world. Or when he said, It is not I but the Father within me who does the works.

And I can of my own self do nothing. Anxiety, stress and negativity cut you off from that power. The illusion that you are separate from the power that runs the universe returns.

You feel yourself to be alone again, struggling against something or trying to achieve this or that. But why did anxiety, stress or negativity arise? Because you turned away from the present moment.

And why did you do that? You thought something else was more important. You forgot your main purpose.

One small error, one misperception creates a world of suffering. Through the present moment you have access to the power of life itself, that which has traditionally been called God. As soon as you turn away from it, God ceases to be a reality in your life and all you are left with is the mental concept of God, which some people believe in and others deny.

Even belief in God is only a poor substitute for the living reality of God manifesting every moment of your life. Would complete harmony with the present moment not imply the cessation of all movement? Doesn't the existence of any goal imply that there is a temporary disruption in that harmony with the present moment, and perhaps a re-establishment of harmony at a higher or more complex level once the goal has been attained?

I imagine that the sapling that pushes its way through the soil can't be in total harmony with the present moment either, because it has a goal, it wants to become a big tree. Maybe once it has reached maturity it will live in harmony with the present moment. The sapling doesn't want anything because it is at one with the totality, and the totality acts through it.

Look at the lilies of the field, how they grow, said Jesus. They toil not, neither do they spin. Yet even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

We could say that the totality, life, wants the sapling to become a tree, but the sapling doesn't see itself as separate from life and so wants nothing for itself. It is one with what life wants. That's why it isn't worried or stressed.

And if it has to die prematurely, it dies with ease. It is as surrendered in death as it is in life. It senses, no matter how obscurely, its rootedness in being, the formless and eternal one life.

Like the Taoist sages of ancient China, Jesus likes to draw our attention to nature because he sees a power at work in it that humans have lost touch with. It is the creative power of the universe. Jesus goes on to say that if God clothes simple flowers in such beauty, how much more will God clothe you.

That is to say, that while nature is a beautiful expression of the evolutionary impulse of the universe, when humans become aligned with the intelligence that underlies it, they will express that same impulse on a higher, more wondrous level. So be true to life by being true to your inner purpose. As you become present and thereby total in what you do, your actions become charged with spiritual power.

At first there may be no noticeable change in what you do, only the how changes. Your primary purpose is now to enable consciousness to flow into what you do. The secondary purpose is whatever you want to achieve through the doing.

Whereas the notion of purpose before was always associated with future, there is now a deeper purpose that can only be found in the present, through the denial of time. When you meet with people, at work or wherever it may be, give them your fullest attention. You are no longer there primarily as a person, but as a field of awareness, of alert presence.

The original reason for interacting with the other person, buying or selling something, requesting or giving information and so on, now becomes secondary. The field of awareness that arises between you becomes the primary purpose for the interaction. That space of awareness becomes more important than what you may be talking about, more important than physical or thought objects.

The human being becomes more important than the things of this world. It does not

mean you neglect whatever needs to be done on a practical level. In fact, the doing unfolds not only more easily, but more powerfully when the dimension of being is acknowledged and so becomes primary.

The arising of that unifying field of awareness between human beings is the most essential factor in relationships on the new earth. Is the notion of success just an egoic illusion? How do we measure true success?

The world will tell you that success is achieving what you set out to do. It will tell you that success is winning, that finding recognition and or prosperity are essential ingredients in any success. All or some of the above are usually by-products of success, but they are not success.

The conventional notion of success is concerned with the outcome of what you do. Some say that success is the result of a combination of hard work and luck, or determination and talent, or being in the right place at the right time. While any of these may be determinants of success, they are not its essence.

What they tell you, because it doesn't know, is that you cannot become successful. You can only be successful. Don't let a mad world tell you that success is anything other than a successful present moment.

And what is that? There is a sense of quality in what you do, even the most simple action. Quality implies care and attention, which come with awareness.

Quality requires your presence. Let's say that you are a business person and after two years of intense stress and strain you finally manage to come out with a product or service that sells well and makes money. Success?

In conventional terms, yes. In reality, you spend two years polluting your body, as well as the earth, with negative energy, made yourself and those around you miserable, and affected many others you never even met. The unconscious assumption behind all such action is that success is a future event and that the end justifies the means.

But the end and the means are one. And if the means did not contribute to human happiness, neither will the end. The outcome, which is inseparable from the actions that led to it, is already contaminated by those actions and so will create further unhappiness.

This is karmic action, which is the unconscious perpetuation of unhappiness. As you already know, your secondary or outer purpose lies within the dimension of time, while your main purpose is inseparable from the now and therefore requires the negation of time. How are they reconciled?

By realizing that your entire life journey ultimately consists of the step you are taking at

this moment. There is always only this one step, and so you give it your fullest attention. This doesn't mean you don't know where you are going.

It just means this step is primary, the destination secondary. And what you encounter at your destination once you get there depends on the quality of this one step. Another way of putting it, what the future holds for you depends on your state of consciousness now.

When doing becomes infused with the timeless quality of being, that is success. Unless being flows into doing, unless you are present, you lose yourself in whatever you do. You also lose yourself in thinking as well as in your reactions to what happens externally.

What exactly do you mean when you say you lose yourself? The essence of who you are is consciousness. When consciousness, you, becomes completely identified with thinking and thus forgets its essential nature, it loses itself in thought.

When it becomes identified with mental-emotional formations such as wanting and fearing, the primary motivating forces of the ego, it loses itself in those formations. Consciousness also loses itself when it identifies with acting and reacting to what happens. Every thought, every desire or fear, every action or reaction is then infused with a false sense of self that is incapable of sensing the simple joy of being and so seeks pleasure and sometimes even pain as substitutes for it.

This is living in forgetfulness of being. In that state of forgetfulness of who you are, every success is no more than a passing delusion. Whatever you achieve, soon you will be unhappy again, or some new problem or dilemma will draw your attention in completely.

What My Inner Purpose Is To finding out what I am supposed to do on the outer level. The outer purpose varies greatly from person to person, and no outer purpose lasts forever. It is subject to time and then replaced by some other purpose.

The extent to which dedication to the inner purpose of awakening changes the external circumstances of your life also varies greatly. For some people, there is a sudden or gradual break with their past. Their work, living situation, relationships, everything undergoes profound change.

Some of the change may be initiated by themselves, not through an agonizing decision-making process, but by a sudden realization or recognition, this is what I have to do. The decision arrives ready-made, so to speak. It comes through awareness, not through thinking.

You wake up one morning and you know what to do. Some people find themselves walking out of an insane work environment or living situation. So before you discover what is right for you on the external level, before you discover what works, what is compatible with the awakening consciousness, you may have to find out what is not right, what no longer works, what is incompatible with your inner purpose.

Other kinds of change may suddenly come to you from without. A chance meeting brings new opportunity and expansion into your life. A long-standing obstacle or conflict dissolves.

Your friends either go through this inner transformation with you or drift out of your life. Some relationships dissolve, others deepen. You may get laid off from your job or you become an agent for positive change at your workplace.

Your spouse leaves you or you reach a new level of intimacy. Some changes may look negative on the surface, but you will soon realize that space is being created in your life for something new to emerge. There may be a period of insecurity and uncertainty.

What should I do? As the ego is no longer running your life, the psychological need for external security, which is illusory anyway, lessens. You are able to live with uncertainty, even enjoy it.

When you become comfortable with uncertainty, infinite possibilities open up in your life. It means fear is no longer a dominant factor in what you do and no longer prevents you from taking action to initiate change. The Roman philosopher Tacitus rightly observed that the desire for safety stands against every great and noble enterprise.

If uncertainty is unacceptable to you, it turns into fear. If it is perfectly acceptable, it turns into increased aliveness, alertness and creativity. Many years ago, when as a result of a strong inner impulse, I walked out of an academic career that the world would have called promising, stepping into complete uncertainty.

And out of that, after several years, emerged my new incarnation as a spiritual teacher. Much later, something similar happened again. The impulse came to give up my home in England and move to the west coast of North America.

I obeyed that impulse, although I didn't know the reason for it. Out of that move into uncertainty came the power of now, most of which was written in California and British Columbia while I didn't have a home of my own. I had virtually no income and lived on my savings, which were quickly running out.

In fact, everything fell into place beautifully. I ran out of money just as I was getting close to finishing writing. I bought a lottery ticket and won \$1,000, which kept me going for another month.

Not everybody, however, will have to go through drastic change in their external circumstances. At the other end of the spectrum, you have people who stay exactly where they are and keep doing whatever they are doing. For them, only the how changes, not the what.

This is not due to fear or inertia. What they are doing already is a perfect vehicle for

consciousness to come into this world, and it needs no other. They, too, bring into manifestation the new earth.

Anybody? If fulfilling your inner purpose is being at one with the present moment, why should anybody feel the need to remove themselves from their current work or living situation? Being at one with what is doesn't mean you no longer initiate change or become incapable of taking action.

But the motivation to take action comes from a deeper level, not from egoic wanting or fearing. Inner alignment with the present moment opens your consciousness and brings it into alignment with the whole, of which the present moment is an integral part. The whole, the totality of life, then acts through you.

What do you mean by the whole? On the one hand, the whole comprises all that exists. It is the world, or the cosmos.

But all things in existence, from microbes to human beings to galaxies, are not really separate things or entities, but form part of a web of interconnected, multidimensional processes. There are two reasons why we don't see this unity, why we see things as separate. One is perception, which reduces reality to what is accessible to us through the small range of our senses, what we can see, hear, smell, taste and touch.

But when we perceive without interpreting or mental labelling, which means without adding thought to our perceptions, we can actually still sense the deeper connectedness underneath our perception of seemingly separate things. The other more serious reason for the illusion of separateness is compulsive thinking. It is when we are trapped in incessant streams of compulsive thinking that the universe really disintegrates for us, and we lose the ability to sense the interconnectedness of all that exists.

Thinking cuts reality up into lifeless fragments. Extremely unintelligent and destructive action arises out of such a fragmented view of reality. However, there is an even deeper level to the whole than the interconnectedness of everything in existence.

At that deeper level, all things are one. It is the source, the unmanifested one life. It is the timeless intelligence that manifests as a universe unfolding in time.

The whole is made up of existence and being, the manifested and the unmanifested, the world and God. So when you become aligned with the whole, you become a conscious part of the interconnectedness of the whole and its purpose, the emergence of consciousness into this world. As a result, spontaneous helpful occurrences, chance encounters, coincidences and synchronistic events happen much more frequently.

Carl Jung called synchronicity an acausal connecting principle. This means there is no causal connection between synchronistic events on our surface level of reality. It is an outer manifestation of an underlying intelligence behind the world of appearances and a

deeper connectedness that our mind cannot understand.

But we can be conscious participants in the unfolding of that intelligence, the flowering consciousness. Nature exists in a state of unconscious oneness with the whole. This, for example, is why virtually no wild animals were killed in the tsunami disaster of 2004.

Being more in touch with the totality than humans, they could sense the tsunami's approach long before it could be seen or heard and so had time to withdraw to higher terrain. Perhaps even that is looking at it from a human perspective. They probably just found themselves moving to higher terrain.

Doing this because of that is the mind's way of cutting up reality, whereas nature lives in unconscious oneness with the whole. It is our purpose and destiny to bring a new dimension into this world by living in conscious oneness with the totality and conscious alignment with universal intelligence. Can the whole use the human mind to create things or bring about situations that are in alignment with its purpose?

Yes. Whenever there is inspiration, which translates as in spirit, and enthusiasm, which means in God, there is a creative empowerment that goes far beyond what a mere person is capable of.

[Speaker 2] (39:21 - 40:07)

Okay, hi everybody, welcome to class number nine of our New Earth web series. We're here with author Eckhart Tolle, number nine, we're counting down. We're down to the last two chapters of our book and it is my most sincere hope that all of our classes so far have been leading you to find more purpose and joy in your own lives and tonight's class, tonight's lesson is really about bringing clarity to finding your inner purpose.

And so I think this is my most exciting chapter of all. I know I say that every chapter. I didn't say that last chapter and I'll tell you why in a few moments, but before we begin the class, I'm going to let you lead us in our moment of silence or moment of silence today.

[Speaker 1] (40:07 - 41:49)

Good, so we are already familiar with the silence that we start with and this time I'd like to use a very short, very powerful line from the Old Testament and I believe that this will be especially helpful for those Christians who are not quite comfortable with silence and somehow feel that silence is not compatible with Christianity or Christian teachings, which is not the case at all. Perhaps it has been overlooked in the past couple of centuries in Christianity, but it is certainly compatible. And so this is one of my favorite lines from the Old Testament and that can take us very powerfully into stillness and this line is, Be still and know that I am God.

Meaning, God is found precisely in that inner stillness, through the realm of inner stillness that you can reach what we call God, but which nobody can understand through the mind. It's a mystery, the mystery which you cannot really explain or name, which we call God, is the depth of that. We touch that when we go into stillness.

So these beautiful lines point to that inner experience. So I'll say it again and when I've said it, we just become still for a moment. Be still and know that I am God.

[Speaker 2] (42:43 - 44:09)

I love that. That's one of my favorite Bible passages. That and lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

Well, today, tonight, we're discussing chapter 9, your inner purpose. Finding your purpose is what I believe we're all put on the planet to do. So many people spend their lives trying to figure out what job to do, what to do, what to do, what to do.

I think when you figure out what your purpose is and you align the outer purpose with the inner purpose, then the job really doesn't matter. That's the essence of what you're saying in this chapter. Let us begin, page 257.

As soon as you rise above mere survival, the question of meaning and purpose becomes a paramount importance in your life. Many people feel caught up in the routines of daily living, you say, that seem to deprive their life of significance. Some believe life is passing them by or has passed them by already.

Others feel severely restricted by the demands of their job and supporting a family. Some are consumed by stress, lost in frantic doing. Many people long for the freedom and expansion that prosperity promises.

Others already enjoy the freedom that comes with prosperity and discover that even that's not enough to endow their lives with true meaning. There is no substitute for finding true purpose. So how do we do it?

[Speaker 1] (44:11 - 46:50)

Now, what you just read basically, of course, means that many people spend their lives in a state of almost permanent dissatisfaction, unfortunately. So they may be looking for some purpose or they may have given up hope that there is some purpose for them and they're just surviving or making a living. Or caught up in the doing.

Caught up in the doing, in the stress of it. And so usually when we talk about purpose, when people talk about purpose, they think of purpose in terms of future. Where am I going?

What am I supposed to do? What's the direction I'm going? What is my goal, the goal

that I want to achieve?

And that, of course, is there, it has its place, but I call that the outer purpose. More fundamental than the outer purpose is what most people usually overlook. And that is the realization that what matters most is finding your inner purpose.

Now, to most people that initially doesn't mean anything, inner purpose. And this is why I explain it briefly in the dialogue that is there in that chapter where somebody asks about, I want to know what my purpose is. And I tell that person, your purpose is to be here at this moment and asking that question.

Because this is where you are. So inner purpose is aligning your life fully with the present moment. So that you are no longer out of alignment with the present moment, which leads to the state of dissatisfaction that we talked about.

That is the reality for many people. So you have to go, first of all, beyond the state of dissatisfaction that is so many people's reality. But you cannot go beyond the state of dissatisfaction through some future goal that says one day I would like to be in a state of fulfillment or satisfaction.

No, you have to enter the state of fulfillment and satisfaction by becoming one internally with the present moment. And your purpose then, your inner purpose, is that alignment with where you are right now. To be totally where you are and whatever you are doing, even if it doesn't look like the life purpose that you want for the next 30 years, whatever you are doing now, to be total in doing it.

No matter what it is, to be true to life by being true to this moment. Yeah.

[Speaker 2] (46:50 - 48:05)

As you say on page 271, there is always only this one step. And so you give it your fullest attention. This doesn't mean that you don't know where you're going.

It just means that the step that you're taking right now is primary. The destination is secondary. And what you encounter at your destination once you get there depends on the quality of this one step.

I love this so much because I discovered this when I was in the third grade. I couldn't articulate it this way in the third grade. When I was in the third grade, I turned in a book report early in Ms. Driver's class. And the reaction that I got from my third grade teacher taught me or informed me that when you do your best, when you do your best in any given moment, that is well received. Because my third grade teacher told all the other teachers in the teacher's lounge and I became known as this kid who really loved to read. And that's why we're sitting here today because of that.

But I learned in the third grade this whole process of whatever you're doing in any given moment, if you do it your best, it leads you to the next best moment. So you don't have to worry about what's the next moment coming if you only do your best in this moment.

[Speaker 1] (48:05 - 48:29)

That's right, because when the next moment comes, it comes as this moment. Right. The future, you never experience the future as the future.

You experience the future when it comes as the now because that's all there is. It's all there ever is. And that's an amazing realization for people to realize life is always just this.

It's always the now.

[Speaker 2] (48:29 - 48:41)

Yeah. It's interesting because last week we had Nick from the Bodhi Tree. And you said when Nick was up talking about he had to worry, well, you have to worry about your bills.

And you said, well, you don't have to worry about it.

[Speaker 1] (48:41 - 48:42)

You have to pay your bills.

[Speaker 2] (48:42 - 48:59)

You have to pay your bills, but you don't have to worry about paying your bills. I don't know about the rest of you, but that lesson has sort of been with me all week. So anytime I'd find myself in the mind worrying about something, I don't have to worry about this.

I can either figure out what to do about it or release that thought.

[Speaker 1] (48:59 - 49:00)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (49:00 - 49:00)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (49:00 - 49:16)

Yes. So if the bill is here but the money is not there right now, I can't do anything, put it aside. And then see what action can I take now.

And then you do whatever action you can take now. Yeah. If you can't take any action, then you just be with it.

Yeah. Right.

[Speaker 2] (49:16 - 49:40)

But I love that when I read that there is always only this one step. And so you give this one step your fullest attention. That's in the middle of page 271, everybody.

And this doesn't mean you don't know where you're going. It just means that this step is primary and the destination is secondary. And what happens is most people are living their lives as though the destination, the end.

Yes. The end is what it's all about.

[Speaker 1] (49:40 - 50:05)

As if the end were more important than the means. The means. And so the means and the end, however, are one.

Right. So if there's dissatisfaction and a denial of the present moment, which is a denial of life. Right.

You're not honoring life if you don't honor this moment by being open to this moment. Then that is how you will experience the future because the future is no more than an extension of now. Right.

[Speaker 2] (50:05 - 51:02)

You also say on page 271, the unconscious assumption behind all such action is, is that success is a future event. And that the end justifies the means. But the end and the means are one.

You say that. Let's say you're a business person after two years of intense stress and strain. You finally managed to come out with a product or service that sells well and makes money.

Success in conventional terms, yes. But in reality, you spent two years polluting your body as well as the earth with negative energy. You made everybody crazy.

Don't say that. Made everybody and everybody around you crazy and affected others you didn't even know. The unconscious assumption behind all of this action is that success is a future event and that the end justifies the means.

But the end and the means are one. And if the means did not contribute to human happiness, neither will the end. Yes.

So whatever the end result is, it's going to carry the energy of what it took to get there.

[Speaker 8] (51:02 - 51:03)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (51:03 - 51:04)

That's it. Yes.

[Speaker 2] (51:05 - 51:06)

Yes. That's exciting.

[Speaker 1] (51:06 - 51:18)

Yes. And that means you actually, you determine what kind of future you're going to experience by deciding to be totally aligned with the present moment.

[Speaker 2] (51:18 - 52:07)

That's right. It's your state of consciousness now that will determine whatever is manifested in the future. And when that happens, that'll just be now.

I got that. I got that very much. OK, so let's let's continue with this lesson before we go to Ivy a little bit.

You say the true, true or primary purpose of your life cannot be found on the outer level. To me, that's the essence of what this book is all about. Everybody who's searching and waiting for answers and looking for it on the outer level.

It does not concern what you do, but what you are, that is to say, your state of consciousness. So the most important thing to realize is this. Your life has an inner purpose and an outer purpose.

Inner purpose concerns being and is primary. Outer purpose concerns doing and is secondary. You want to elaborate on that?

[Speaker 1] (52:09 - 52:53)

So once you realize that the primary purpose of your life is this is the inner and this is what becomes the main purpose, then the secondary purpose, the outer purpose falls into place by being true to life and being true to now. Life will bring to you whatever is most appropriate. As far as your inner purpose is concerned, life will become helpful.

Suddenly, sometimes the helpful idea comes from within a sudden realization. Oh, this is what I want to do. This is what I have to do.

But the realization only came because you were aligned with the present moment.

[Speaker 2] (52:53 - 53:00)

So let's say this. Everybody, everybody who was born is alive and breathing, has an inner purpose.

[Speaker 1] (53:01 - 53:40)

Yes. The inner purpose is the same for all of humanity, which is being aligned with life, saying yes to life by saying yes to now. Aligned with the power of the present moment, which is the power of life.

That's everybody's purpose. Then the outer purpose varies from person to person. How that translates into what you do varies from person to person.

And even in one lifetime, it can vary. You may have a certain outer purpose for 10 or 20 years of your life and suddenly change completely. So that that varies and is subject to time.

It doesn't necessarily last your whole lifetime.

[Speaker 2] (53:40 - 54:04)

You say finding and living in alignment with the inner purpose is the foundation of fulfilling your outer purpose. It's the basis for true success. Without that alignment, you can still achieve certain things through effort, through struggle, through determination and sheer hard work or cunning.

But there is no joy in such endeavor and in such endeavor. And it invariably ends in some form of suffering.

[Speaker 1] (54:04 - 54:18)

Yes. That is you're struggling to make it. You're struggling and fighting and basically you're making you're fighting against life or the world.

Me against the universe is what the ego, how the ego sees it.

[Speaker 2] (54:18 - 54:41)

And isn't it sort of like swimming upstream? I always compare it to swimming upstream. When you're like going against the grain of your life, there's a flow to all of our lives.

And if you are suffering, if you are in pain, if you can't figure out what it is you're supposed to do, if you're worried, worried, worried all the time. It is because you're going against the flow or the grain of your life.

[Speaker 8] (54:41 - 54:41)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (54:41 - 54:43)

Means you're going against inner purpose.

[Speaker 8] (54:44 - 54:44)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (54:44 - 54:47)

That when you align with inner purpose, everything flows.

[Speaker 1] (54:48 - 54:48)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (54:48 - 54:48)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (54:49 - 55:13)

And any negative state, whenever negativity arises and you dwell in negative inner states, then you're not going with the flow of life. You're against the flow of life. And then you experience life as not helpful.

You experience life as even as hostile because you are in a state of inner denial. You're in a state of negativity. You're not open to life.

[Speaker 2] (55:14 - 55:50)

Okay. I got that. I really got that.

I really got that. Another friend of mine, a teacher who wrote a book called Seat of the Soul, Gary Zukav calls it, says, when the personality or ego comes to serve the energy of the soul or consciousness, we've been calling that, when the personality comes to serve the energy of the soul, that is authentic empowerment. I take that to mean from Seat of the Soul that when you align your personality or use your personality to serve the inner purpose, to serve the soul or the consciousness, then you are your most powerful.

[Speaker 1] (55:50 - 56:05)

Yes. In the world. Yes.

And then you're not run by the mind anymore because the mind becomes the servant of what I sometimes call awareness or presence. The mind then serves something greater than itself, which is the consciousness.

[Speaker 2] (56:05 - 56:34)

You say on page 259, instead of being lost in your thinking, when you are awake or aware, you recognize yourself as the awareness behind it. Thinking then ceases to be a self-serving, autonomous activity that takes possession of you and runs your life. Awareness takes over from thinking.

And instead of being in charge of your life, love this everybody, instead of being in charge of your life, thinking becomes the servant of awareness.

[Speaker 1] (56:34 - 56:42)

Yes. And then the mind is quite helpful. So the mind can be used for many wonderful things.

Right. When it no longer controls you.

[Speaker 2] (56:42 - 57:08)

I got it. So in essence, our goal on Earth as human beings, these spiritual beings in the body, higher consciousness inside this flesh-filled membranous whatever body, our goal is to allow the light of inner purpose or consciousness to come through everything that we do.

[Speaker 1] (57:08 - 57:23)

Yes. This is why we're here. And that is then also the entire universe is the purpose of the universe, one could say, is the flowering of consciousness.

Right. It moves towards more and more consciousness.

[Speaker 9] (57:24 - 57:24)

Okay.

[Speaker 1] (57:24 - 57:38)

So we then become bringers of that, which is why we are here. So then the consciousness, you could call it the light, the light of the source, the light of God comes through the human form. That's right.

[Speaker 2] (57:38 - 57:54)

And so when you allow the light of God, the light of consciousness to come through you, and it is allowed to fuel whatever it is you do, whatever it is you do will be fueled with a spiritual power that will allow you to be the best at what you do.

[Speaker 1] (57:55 - 58:14)

Yes. And then that also means that what you do is not of primary importance, but how you do what you do is what matters, how you do it. And you could be doing something that the world would regard as relatively insignificant and yet make an enormous difference to the consciousness on the planet.

[Speaker 2] (58:15 - 58:23)

Ivy is Skyping us from her living room in Richmond, Virginia. Hi, Ivy. I hear you have a question about one of my favorite quotes.

Go ahead. What is the question?

[Speaker 5] (58:23 - 59:31)

Well, my question deals with trying to find a career path that merges your inner purpose with outer purpose. And on the top of page 274, you say, Eckhart says, there may be a period of insecurity and uncertainty. And he goes on to say that if you're able to live with uncertainty, even enjoy it, you become comfortable with uncertainty.

Infinite possibilities open up in your life. And my question is this. I'm 26 years old.

And in the past few months, I've tried to find a career path that merges my inner purpose with my outer purpose and haven't really been able to do so. I began to think a lot about my life's purpose and question whether or not I would ever find a career that merged my life's work with something I was passionate about. So my question really is twofold.

The first is, how should I approach finding a career that is fulfilling but doesn't strengthen my ego? And secondly, and perhaps the more pressing question for me is, how do I do this while also becoming comfortable and embracing the uncertainty that's defining my life right now?

[Speaker 1] (59:33 - 59:56)

Good question. Yes. So to what extent have you become successful in embracing and accepting this time of your life that you don't know yet what your purpose is?

To what extent are you able to say, well, can I become comfortable with not knowing? Have you been able to do that?

[Speaker 5] (59:57 - 1:00:05)

There are periods where I've been able to, but mostly it's just a lot of thinking and feeling very uncomfortable about not knowing.

[Speaker 1] (1:00:06 - 1:02:13)

Yes. And often the uncomfortableness are certain thoughts that go through your mind that tell you that it's not okay to be in this state. And then you have certain emotions, which are the body's reaction to those thoughts.

So when these thoughts arise, they tell you it's not okay. The way you are right now is not okay. Realize that these are thoughts that arise in your mind, conditioned by the surrounding culture and so on.

And you don't necessarily need to believe in each thought that comes and tells you it's not okay not to know what to do. Life is an adventure. It's not a package tour.

When you travel, you can take a package tour and everything is already planned. There's no uncertainty. And every year you go to a nice hotel in a more exotic country, but you won't even know it's exotic because your hotel room is the same as every other hotel room.

You're totally sure that everything is planned. You know beforehand where you're going to be in ten days' time exactly. That's not an adventure and it's unlikely that you are going to evolve internally through a trip like that.

But if you went into a true trip into some exotic country, thrown back on your own resources, then you would encounter true adventure. And you would probably not be the same person when you come back. Why not?

Because we are constantly faced with uncertainty. And if you're able to accept that, you can actually enjoy the adventure. I'm giving this analogy of a trip because life is a journey.

And so the person who cannot enjoy the uncertainty when adventure comes is going to be in a continuous state of negativity, of fear. I don't want to be here. I'd rather be at home.

So realize that life is an adventure and part of the adventure of life is being in that state that you are in now. If everything were already clear to you now, everything were already mapped out, there would be no evolution of yourself as a human being.

[Speaker 2] (1:02:13 - 1:02:25)

And may I say, Ivy, that is part of what being 26 is all about. That is what 26 is. You're

trying to figure it out.

That is what the 20s are for.

[Speaker 1] (1:02:25 - 1:02:57)

Yes. And another very helpful thing to remember is one of the most wonderful things in your period of life is to make mistakes. Yeah.

Because mistakes means you realize, oh, that's not that wasn't my purpose. Yes. And so you're a little bit closer to your true purpose.

And then perhaps you think, oh, maybe that is my purpose. And then after a while you realize, no, that's not. It's very helpful to make mistakes because gradually you begin to realize what it is that is right for you.

Yeah.

[Speaker 2] (1:02:57 - 1:04:07)

And many times, as Eckhart says in this chapter, Ivy, and you will find in your 20s, the 20s are about figuring out where you want to be. And there's this frustration. That's why they call that show The Young and the Restless because there's a restlessness about it.

And I know that because I've kept journals since I was 15. In my 20s, I'm just restless, restless, restless. And when I was your age, 26, I was an anchorwoman in television doing the evening news.

I hated it every single day. And what I now realize, and even then, my displeasure with being in that place every day was really informing me what I needed to do. What I needed to do was to get out of that space.

And many times, being in a space that you can clearly identify as this is, I do not want to do this. I want to be in television, I knew, but I do not want to do this. And I had my father and everybody around saying, you're going to give up that job in television?

I knew I could not do that. News felt exploitive to me. So many times, if you're in a position where you know what you don't want to do, isn't that also helpful, Eckhart?

[Speaker 1] (1:04:07 - 1:04:25)

Oh, yes, yes. For a while, I thought my life purpose was to be an academic at university. And then the realization, after years of spending time working hard to become a professor, I realized that's not my life purpose at all.

But I had to go through that.

[Speaker 2] (1:04:25 - 1:04:28)

Didn't you give up a promising career as an academic?

[Speaker 1] (1:04:28 - 1:05:53)

Yes. I gave up the PhD. I gave up the promising career.

And my relatives, my mother, thought I was insane to give that up. But I knew this is what I had to do. It was so clear.

There was no doubt about it anymore. For a little while, there was doubt, and then the realization was so strong, I had to walk out of there. And that led to a period of uncertainty.

For a few years, I didn't know what am I supposed to do with my life. Here I am. I was just barely managing to survive.

And gradually, I lived, but I was not unhappy. I was happy with the present moment then already. And then gradually, something evolved.

People started asking me questions. People that I met casually in parks. And gradually, a kind of spiritual teaching started to happen.

And after a little while, when somebody called me for the first time, Oh, you are a spiritual teacher. Oh, that's what I am. And so the purpose came by itself.

It came just out of that state of just being with what is and not being unhappy with not knowing. Being at ease with not knowing. Then, it's much more likely to come to you when you are at ease with not knowing.

So the question that you can ask yourself, can I be at ease with not knowing?

[Speaker 2] (1:05:53 - 1:06:16)

Because what you say on 274 that Ivy had mentioned earlier, you become comfortable with uncertainty. Infinite possibilities open up in your life. And it means when you become comfortable with uncertainty, it means fear is no longer a dominant factor in what you do and no longer prevents you from taking action to initiate change.

That's the big thing.

[Speaker 8] (1:06:16 - 1:06:16)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:06:16 - 1:06:26)

Because as long as you are afraid, you cannot allow the energy of what is supposed to happen to come into your life, as long as you are afraid, right? The fear blocks that.

[Speaker 1] (1:06:26 - 1:06:26)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:06:26 - 1:06:27)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (1:06:28 - 1:06:53)

So be alert and watch your mind to see what kind of thoughts it produces. Feel also there may be the emotion of fear, as Oprah says, arising occasionally, associated with a thought. Like what's going to happen to me.

Yes. Because the mind wants to know what the future is going to bring. But how dead life would be, how dreadfully boring it would be if you knew already what's going to happen.

[Speaker 2] (1:06:53 - 1:07:21)

Well, part of that is because, too, people get afraid because of, again, what Nick said. Nick is our spiritual teacher. Because of what Nick said last week about worrying about your bills because you're living outside yourself.

You're creating more debt, creating more debt, creating more debt, allowing yourself to operate from the thinking mind. Yes. At the time that you made these decisions for yourself, you were living on, practically, you said, at the poverty level.

[Speaker 1] (1:07:22 - 1:07:22)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:07:22 - 1:07:22)

So.

[Speaker 1] (1:07:23 - 1:07:38)

Yes. And so you survive somehow. You make it.

One more question before you go. Is there anything in your life that you truly enjoy? Are there certain things that you enjoy doing that may not be necessarily associated in your mind with career?

[Speaker 5] (1:07:41 - 1:07:45)

Not really. That I can think of. Nothing I can think of.

[Speaker 1] (1:07:45 - 1:07:52)

Okay. Then what's left is for you to enjoy the present moment and make that your spiritual practice. Yeah.

[Speaker 2] (1:07:53 - 1:08:03)

Okay. But I thought you were saying earlier, Ivy, about, you know, trying to align your passion, what you love, and getting paid for it. Isn't that what you were talking about earlier?

[Speaker 5] (1:08:03 - 1:08:13)

Well, something I was passionate about. To align something. To align what I'm passionate about once I figure that out.

I don't really know what that is right now.

[Speaker 2] (1:08:14 - 1:08:31)

Yeah. Well, to reiterate something that Eckhart was saying last week, it doesn't come out of your head. For everybody who's looking for that answer, for the purpose of your life, or what should I be doing, it does not come from your head.

It's not something that you're ever going to think up.

[Speaker 1] (1:08:31 - 1:08:32)

No.

[Speaker 2] (1:08:32 - 1:09:11)

You don't think it. It comes from that space that we opened tonight's session with, being still and knowing that I am God. Being still and allowing the presence of a universal energy, the presence of consciousness to come through you in such a way that it's a feeling.

It is a feeling. It is not something you're going to think up how to do it. And you will just start to feel that I feel better doing this thing than I feel doing the other thing.

It's a feeling that comes to you, not something that comes in your head.

[Speaker 1] (1:09:11 - 1:09:29)

That's right, yes. And you need to be careful that you are not in a state of dissatisfaction because when you're in dissatisfaction, the answer is not likely to come, neither from

within nor from without. So keep your inner space clear, aligned with now, so that no negativity arises.

[Speaker 2] (1:09:30 - 1:10:04)

And then may I add also, for you and everybody else who's trying to get this whole idea of purpose, some clarity about that, when you allow yourself to be still with it, you're not afraid of the uncertainty. The universe rises up to meet you. Eckhart says in here, I can't remember what page in this chapter, but he talks about how coincidences happen, little things and big things happen.

So you then have to be alert and paying attention to your life so when the opening shows itself, you're ready.

[Speaker 1] (1:10:04 - 1:10:26)

Yes, and that's much more likely to come when you're in a state of clarity aligned with now than the answer can come from within or the answer can come from without. As some chance encounter, something you see in the paper, or something you can't even think where it might come from, a synchronistic event, a coincidence.

[Speaker 2] (1:10:26 - 1:10:27)

It shows itself.

[Speaker 1] (1:10:27 - 1:10:28)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:10:28 - 1:10:33)

That's right. In ways that you hadn't seen before. Thank you, Ivy, from Richmond, Virginia.

Thank you. Thank you so much.

[Speaker 8] (1:10:34 - 1:10:34)

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (1:10:34 - 1:10:50)

So you say on 261, while you're perhaps still waiting for something significant to happen to your life, you may not realize that the most significant thing that can happen to a human being has already happened within you, the beginning of the separation process of thinking and awareness.

[Speaker 1] (1:10:51 - 1:11:18)

Which is the awakening, which is another way of explaining what the term awakening means, that before your awareness or your consciousness was totally identified with thought processes, with thinking. But now, and this is the case for everybody who reads this book and finds it meaningful. Right.

It means if you are reading this book and you find it meaningful, something within your response, it means you have already begun to awaken.

[Speaker 9] (1:11:18 - 1:11:19)

To awaken, yeah.

[Speaker 1] (1:11:19 - 1:11:24)

If you haven't, the book will be meaningless. Got it.

[Speaker 2] (1:11:24 - 1:12:03)

You say as long as you are unaware of being on 263, you will seek meaning only within the dimension of doing and the future, that is to say, the dimension of time. Whatever meaning or fulfillment you find will dissolve. Invariably, it will be destroyed by time.

And meaning, we find on that level, is true only relatively and temporary. So you're saying looking outside yourself, you're not going to find the meaning. No, that's right.

So let's go to the Beauditry Bookstore in West Hollywood. Is Nick there tonight? Well, Nick, step on up to the microphone.

You're back. So glad to see you.

[Speaker 4] (1:12:04 - 1:12:04)

Good to be here.

[Speaker 2] (1:12:05 - 1:12:07)

Okay. You have a question tonight?

[Speaker 4] (1:12:08 - 1:12:55)

I do. And actually, my question kind of relies on a premise that's not exactly stated in the book. But the premise is God is love.

And if God is love and you love what you're doing, as far as a career, then does God then sanction that career? And is it then meant to be? Is it right if, let's say, if you don't go to church, but if you enjoy doing something like reading, and if you're reading constantly

and you get a more spiritual feeling from reading than ever walking into a church, then isn't that right?

Isn't that in alignment with, or is love not anything that matters in a career choice?

[Speaker 1] (1:12:56 - 1:15:37)

Well, good question. Now, love, of course, is used in a very loose sense. It means so many different things to different people.

And the expression, I love this or that, or I love doing this or that, is used casually by people, often meaning totally different things. For example, if somebody is obsessed with what they do in an ego way, totally focused, but in a negative way to a large extent, totally obsessed with what they are doing, an outside observer might say, oh, he loves what he's doing. He loves it so much that he gets up at 5 every morning and doesn't leave the office until 10 at night.

But he's totally obsessed with what he's doing, and there's no love in it. It's an obsession. But because love is used in such a loose way, sometimes we call that love.

So when you actually love what you are doing, it's a totally different energy field that moves into what you are doing. It means you are aligned completely with what you do. And then, yes, then you do bring a different consciousness.

You bring the unconditioned consciousness into this world through whatever you do. And it might be a doing, or it may just be being somewhere. You mention a church, you can find God in many places.

Any place is holy. And the present moment, when you only pay attention to it completely, then you realize actually it's sacred. The present moment is sacred when you really bring attention to it.

And then it doesn't matter where you are. You can be in a building, you can be out in nature, you can be in the middle of a traffic, and you really bring your attention to this moment and you realize there is a sacredness here. You may be able to feel it more deeply when you are out in nature than in the middle of LA freeway, but even there it can be sensed if you are present enough.

And there, that's love. There love arises. And if you are doing something and you are totally in what you do, not obsessed, not wanting the future more than you want the present, but totally wanting the present, totally wanting what you are doing, then, yes, then you love what you are doing.

That is true love. And anybody who embodies that energy is creating the new earth.

[Speaker 4] (1:15:39 - 1:15:40)

So that's correct then.

[Speaker 1] (1:15:40 - 1:15:40)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (1:15:41 - 1:16:20)

There's a difference. I guess I'm thinking of Joseph Campbell where he talks about following your bliss, and he talks about how appetitive desires like eating and sex and drugs, things through the body, loves that come through the body, are nothing compared to the love that comes from the spirit, which makes everything else pale in comparison. And that is the bliss that Joseph Campbell talks about.

Yes. And that's what I think you mean when you say that we are present and we are doing what we are supposed to do because we feel that feeling that makes everything else pale in comparison. Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:16:21 - 1:17:08)

Nick, that's what he's talking about at the bottom of 261. So while you're perhaps still waiting for something significant to happen in your life, you may not realize the most significant thing that can happen has already happened within you, the beginning of the separation process of thinking and awareness. When you take yourself out of your head and take yourself out of the doing, doing, doing, doing, doing, and allow yourself to connect with the consciousness or spirit or soul, whichever word you want to use for it, that is connected to all consciousness.

The spirit that is connected to the greater spirit is what he's talking about. Yes. You got it, Nick.

Thanks. It's a lot of hard work. Nick, listen, I didn't worry this week because he's told you not to worry.

Have you been worried about your bills this week?

[Speaker 1] (1:17:10 - 1:17:12)

Yeah, a little bit.

[Speaker 2] (1:17:13 - 1:17:15)

Oh, wow.

[Speaker 1] (1:17:15 - 1:18:10)

Thanks, everybody. One more thing just to add to this. When the doing, when you're

doing in that state of consciousness, that means whatever you do is not primarily a means to an end.

Correct. But an end in itself. Right.

You know what you want to achieve through the doing. That's fine. But the essence of the doing is in the doing, not the goal that you want to achieve through it.

So often the question you can ask yourself is, is what I'm doing right now primarily a means to an end, or am I total in what I do? And there's a different quality flows into what you do when it is not just a means to an end. And that is doing in the state of presence, and different energy flows into that.

[Speaker 2] (1:18:10 - 1:19:00)

I love that. We're at the bottom of 263. You say, for example, if caring for your children gives meaning to your life, because everybody's looking for meaning, what happens to the meaning when they don't need you anymore and perhaps don't even listen to you anymore?

If helping others gives meaning to your life, you depend on others being worse off than yourself so that your life can continue to be meaningful and you feel good about yourself. If the desire to excel, win, or succeed, I'm at the top of 264, everybody, at this or that activity provides you with meaning, what if you never win or your winning streak comes to an end? Making it in whatever field is only meaningful as long as there are thousands or millions of others who don't make it.

So you need other human beings to fail so that your life can have meaning. I was going to ask, though, what if you're making it, you're aligned with your purpose?

[Speaker 1] (1:19:00 - 1:19:06)

Yes. Now, after that, it doesn't say that those things should not be pursued immediately after what you just read.

[Speaker 2] (1:19:06 - 1:19:22)

Yes. It says, I'm not saying here that helping others, caring for your children, or striving for excellence, in whatever field, are not worthwhile things to do. For many people, they're important.

In the end, though, you say it means you should connect them to your inner primary purpose so that a deeper meaning flows into what you do.

[Speaker 1] (1:19:22 - 1:20:33)

Yes. For example, then, if, for example, we talked about looking after your children, and that being the main purpose of your life, and again, we have the two dimensions of purpose, outer purpose, which is what a good parent does anyway, you look after the needs of the child, you protect the child as much as possible, but is the inner purpose there also? The inner purpose is there when a field of awareness arises between you and the child.

There's a space. Are you able to give the child spaciousness or space? Are you able to be open and listen to the child in a nonjudgmental way?

Are you able to be with your child? Are you able to be with your child, or are you lost in doing? Is it continuous doing, or can you bring being into your relationship with your child?

And if you bring being in, that is you're fulfilling the inner purpose. And then, when the child grows up, it's much less likely or improbable that you will get attached to your role of parent. And you will then be able to let go of the role and then be able to be whatever you need to be in any given situation.

[Speaker 2] (1:20:33 - 1:21:16)

All right. You say if you ignore your inner purpose, that's why I keep reading from the book because I think I want to stress how important it is to connect your inner purpose. If you ignore your inner purpose, bottom of 264, no matter what you do, even if it looks spiritual, the ego will creep into how you do it, and so the means will corrupt the end.

The common saying, the road to hell is paved with good intentions, points to this truth. So in other words, not your aims or your actions are primary, but the state of consciousness out of which they come. Fulfilling your primary purpose is laying the foundation for a new reality, a new earth.

Doesn't that mean that it's not just what you do, but it's the intention behind what you do it?

[Speaker 1] (1:21:17 - 1:21:52)

Yes. The consciousness that flows into what you do and there's no future is always secondary in the doing. That is, your future is not that you look forward to primarily, but totality in what you do, being totally here.

Any performer, any artist knows this very well. When you are total, then a completely different energy arises.

[Speaker 2] (1:21:52 - 1:21:52)

That's right.

[Speaker 1] (1:21:53 - 1:22:11)

I sometimes, you see, the moment the artist performs, sometimes there's an empowerment that suddenly comes in because then, it's sometimes only then that this person can be absolutely total in the present moment.

[Speaker 2] (1:22:11 - 1:22:15)

Yeah, yeah, yeah. I see that. I was with Tina Turner and Cher this weekend.

[Speaker 8] (1:22:15 - 1:22:16)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:22:16 - 1:22:56)

The show that we're doing on May 8th, everybody don't miss that, Tina Turner and Cher, and watching them in rehearsal, you know, sitting in the, you know, we're just all sitting in the bleachers and watching and then when they each came to the stage, something happened where there was like, they were infused by something from another level that you could see. Something came over them on the stage and whatever that was, this is so interesting, watching them perform, you say, I want some of that. I want some of that.

And what that is, is the presence or level of consciousness that they're bringing. Yes. Not just the beat and the rock and roll.

[Speaker 1] (1:22:56 - 1:22:57)

No.

[Speaker 2] (1:22:57 - 1:22:57)

No.

[Speaker 1] (1:22:57 - 1:23:04)

And that's also what people respond to. They go there because they can sense that there's something there that is very powerful.

[Speaker 2] (1:23:04 - 1:23:07)

Very powerful, yeah. Inspiration and enthusiasm.

[Speaker 1] (1:23:08 - 1:23:08)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:23:08 - 1:23:29)

Yeah, and you say when the combination of inspiration and enthusiasm, something happens that's bigger than one person. Yes. Yeah.

So Gwen and Bob have spent the last 17 years teaching at schools on U.S. military bases throughout Europe. They now live outside Munich, Germany, and are Skyping us from their kitchen. Hi, Gwen and Bob, from Munich.

[Speaker 9] (1:23:29 - 1:23:29)

Hi Oprah.

[Speaker 2] (1:23:30 - 1:23:34)

Hi. Hello to you all. It's the middle of the night there, early morning.

What's your question?

[Speaker 6] (1:23:35 - 1:24:28)

Well, my question is about apologizing. Reading on page 258, you say the most important thing to realize is you're like us, inner and outer purpose. And I have found that apologizing when it's the right time helps me get back in alignment.

However, when I've been wronged by someone, I expect to hear that apology to help build the relationship and get it back to a positive way. And I like feeling comfortable around others. And when there's not closure and apologies don't come, I feel very uncomfortable.

And I'm beginning to wonder if this is my ego at play and how can I maintain an inner and outer alignment when I don't feel I've had an appropriate apology from the person I expected it from.

[Speaker 2] (1:24:28 - 1:24:46)

Well, you just answered your own question, really. I'm going to let Eckhart answer that. But you just answered your own question because you just, key word here, appropriate.

I've not received the appropriate apology from people. That would be your ego that needs that appropriate apology. Take it away, Eckhart.

[Speaker 1] (1:24:48 - 1:26:09)

Mr. Tholen. And adding to that, of course, the ego, another thing the ego does, it keeps accounts and it says, you owe me. And in this case, of course, it says, you owe me an apology.

Now, this is good because this is an opportunity for you to become aware of the ego in

you. So whenever the ego arises and you recognize it as the ego, it's a great opportunity of saying, oh, there's the ego. There are the thoughts that the ego produces in my mind which say, he should apologize, she should have apologized.

And another thought that comes, I can't be comfortable with this person anymore unless he or she apologizes. So you can observe the thoughts that the ego produces and you can observe the emotions that are there as a result of those thoughts. So it's a wonderful opportunity for you to see your own ego, which is no more than the human ego.

It means there's anything wrong with you. Right. But to observe the ego in action.

This is always the greatest thing. And then at that moment when you become aware of this kind of thought, emotional, mental-emotional pattern in you, who are you? When you recognize it, you're already in the space of awareness from where you recognize it.

[Speaker 2] (1:26:09 - 1:26:12)

And you take away its power. You diminish its power.

[Speaker 1] (1:26:12 - 1:26:36)

Yes. And so people, there are many reasons why people don't apologize. People don't apologize because they may not even know that there is anything to apologize in their view of things.

Or they may not apologize because their interpretation of what's happened is the complete opposite of your interpretation. And perhaps they think or their ego thinks that you should apologize. Or, or.

[Speaker 6] (1:26:36 - 1:26:41)

I like to think I do. I get it.

[Speaker 2] (1:26:41 - 1:26:55)

But also that's how you're using it based on what you're saying, based on what you've just told us here. It's your ego's way of feeling superior because you like to think you do. And you're the one that goes and says, well, I apologized and you didn't.

[Speaker 1] (1:26:57 - 1:28:07)

Or you can keep a resentment inside for quite a while. And in that resentment, whenever you think of that person or you meet that person, there's a little resentment at the back, which is also the ego. The ego loves hanging onto resentments.

And when resentments go on for a long time, as I've described somewhere in the book, they become grievances. Right. Grievances are heavy, long-term resentments.

So you can observe that in yourself and, again, be happy that you are observing, able to observe the ego in you. It's a wonderful thing to be able to do that. And, of course, and then the other person who is not apologizing, perhaps it's the ego who prevents them from apologizing because the ego in many people, this is not a particular function perhaps of your ego, but in many other people, the ego finds it almost impossible to apologize because it believes that it would be losing something by apologizing, which is, of course, a delusion.

So these things happen. It's a wonderful opportunity for you to see your own ego. And by seeing it, awareness grows in you.

[Speaker 2] (1:28:07 - 1:28:09)

That's right. Bob, what's your question for Eckhart?

[Speaker 7] (1:28:10 - 1:28:26)

Yes, on page 265, Eckhart refers to your external purpose becomes charged with spiritual power because your aims and intentions will be one with the evolutionary impulse of the universe.

[Speaker 2] (1:28:26 - 1:28:27)

I love that.

[Speaker 7] (1:28:27 - 1:28:30)

What is the evolutionary impulse of the universe?

[Speaker 2] (1:28:30 - 1:29:05)

That is so great. Let's read that one more time. Once that foundation, he says, fulfilling your primary purpose is laying the foundation for a new reality, a new earth.

Once that foundation is there, your external purpose becomes charged with spiritual power because your aims and intentions will be one with the evolutionary impulse of the universe. Thank you. Because I had written aha and did three little, I've read it three times, and I got stars, circles, everything around that.

That's great. Thank you for bringing that up, Bob. Okay.

What do you mean by that?

[Speaker 1] (1:29:05 - 1:31:09)

Now, I'm not sending you back to the book, but the answer is somewhere in the book. But I'm not sending you there now, so let's look at it. Okay.

The evolutionary purpose of the universe is the growth of consciousness. It's going towards, something is flowing into this world of so-called matter, physicality. Something is flowing into this world of physicality or matter that comes from a different dimension almost, one could say.

Well, how do I know this? Because I know it in myself. And I know it, I've observed it in other people too.

Something is flowing into this world of this heavy, it seems to be very heavy, the heaviness of matter. Something very different flows in, which I call consciousness, which you can call spirit. So, a spirit is beginning, has already started a long time ago, but now beginning more fully through the human form, amongst other forms, to come into this world more and more fully.

This is the arising of awareness, the arising of presence. And all that is part of the greater evolution because there's a famous dictum, which is so true, as above, so below. So, whatever happens here on this planet and in the human form will be reflected throughout the universe.

These are universal movements, as above, so below, as below, so above. So, what happens here in the microcosm of the earth will also be happening in the macrocosm. So, when I say, people might ask me, how do you know what the purpose of the universe is, the evolution of the universe is?

Because I know it in myself. If you know it in yourself, you know many, many answers, even about the macrocosm, because the macrocosm is no more than a reflection of the inner.

[Speaker 2] (1:31:10 - 1:31:25)

And you see it all the time in nature. Yes. You see it all the time in nature.

The whole process that's going on in nature is also going on with humans. Yes. We compare ourselves to nature.

Yes. Yeah, the principles are the same. Yeah.

Did that answer your question, Bob?

[Speaker 1] (1:31:27 - 1:31:58)

Kind of. No, you have to really know the answer. You have to go within.

It's not through the mind or through somebody like listening to me and then saying, okay, I believe what you said. I don't want anybody to believe what I said. I want people to really go within and verify within themselves whether or not that is true in their own

experience.

So by becoming more conscious of your inner being, many answers will come.

[Speaker 2] (1:31:58 - 1:33:52)

Okay, let me take a stab at it, interpreting what I hear Eckhart saying. He's saying that there is a universal source or power of energy that all of us, that we all stem from that universal power or source or energy. You're with me, right?

And you can call it God. You can call it whatever you choose to call it. You can call it higher consciousness or you can call it universal energy.

You can call it the divine. When you tap into the part of you that we're calling consciousness or presence or inner purpose, when you tap into that, that is connected to the source of all universal power and energy. You're with me so far?

Yeah. Okay. And when you tap into that part of you that is connected to all universal power and energy, your aims and intentions will be one with what all universal power and energy is striving for.

And what it's striving for is for you to allow the consciousness to come through you as a human being. So that's what he means by evolutionary impulse. The impulse of the universe is to support you and you bringing about your higher consciousness.

That's why you're here, is to allow that part of you that is connected to all that is universal energy, the source or God. To better explain it, it is the God in you. When you allow the God in you to come forth, the God of all things supports that.

[Speaker 1] (1:33:53 - 1:34:08)

Yeah. And you just gave us a demonstration of that because the whole energy shifted when you spoke those words. A very powerful energy came through.

So beyond what you said, the energy that came through with it was actually a demonstration of that.

[Speaker 2] (1:34:08 - 1:34:13)

Well, thank you. That's true. Did it?

Yeah. You got it now, Bob?

[Speaker 7] (1:34:14 - 1:34:14)

Yeah.

[Speaker 2] (1:34:14 - 1:34:16)

Can I ask one more thing? Sure, sure.

[Speaker 7] (1:34:16 - 1:34:35)

Would there be a way to convey Eckhart's teachings on awareness to Christians who are probably offended by labels like evolution? Is there a way to convey this message?

[Speaker 6] (1:34:36 - 1:34:39)

Of the awakening without getting into the evolution.

[Speaker 7] (1:34:39 - 1:34:43)

To people who are going to really shut down when they hear the word evolution.

[Speaker 1] (1:34:44 - 1:35:00)

Well, if they are completely shut down, then, of course, there's no way they are going to listen to you. But not all those people are going to be completely shut down. I don't believe that evolution is necessarily a problem for all Christians.

Yeah.

[Speaker 2] (1:35:00 - 1:35:17)

And evolutionary process, the evolutionary impulse of the universe is about the evolvment as the earth. Because even as Christians, you know that the earth keeps evolving. It keeps evolving.

It keeps moving forward. We as human beings keep evolving.

[Speaker 1] (1:35:17 - 1:35:19)

You can see it in your own life.

[Speaker 2] (1:35:19 - 1:35:33)

You can see it in your own life. You're not the same as you were 25 years ago. That is your evolutionary process as Bob and Gwen here on the planet.

Bob and Gwen have evolved as Christians.

[Speaker 8] (1:35:33 - 1:35:34)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:35:34 - 1:36:43)

And even as you are a practicing Christian in the beginning of practicing Christianity, your faith may not be as strong or you may not be as tested. But you evolve in the process of your Christianity. Actually, can you ask somebody in the back to bring me the e-mail, Dean, that came in from a message board this week that the woman who talked about Father, Son, and Holy Ghost as consciousness and that there was a beautiful e-mail that came on the message board from a woman who's, you know, a practicing Christian who said that she was Catholic.

And I'm going to try to get the e-mails because she best... And I had an aha moment reading it because I thought, oh, that's right. The Holy Trinity, the Holy Spirit is the higher consciousness that you're talking about.

And you just call it consciousness. But as a Christian, it is the Holy Spirit where Jesus said, I leave you with the Holy Spirit. Yes.

You see that, right, Bob? Oh, yeah. Yeah.

[Speaker 6] (1:36:43 - 1:36:59)

It's just the use of that word sometimes puts some people off that might otherwise have the door to be awakened. And just knowing that word is in the book, they might just say, oh, I'm not quite ready to do that yet. Evolution.

Evolution.

[Speaker 1] (1:37:00 - 1:37:16)

Well, I think it will particularly put people off who take a literal, absolutely literal interpretation of Genesis. But most Christians, I believe, don't take an absolutely literal interpretation of Genesis. And they would be...

[Speaker 2] (1:37:16 - 1:37:18)

And if you do, then that's not for you.

[Speaker 1] (1:37:18 - 1:37:19)

No, that's fine.

[Speaker 2] (1:37:19 - 1:37:21)

Then this isn't the path that you need to follow.

[Speaker 1] (1:37:21 - 1:38:55)

Yes. But if you're open to the idea that the creation may not be literally true, but that there is actually, it's a description of an evolutionary process, not of blind chance. This is

what Christians object to mostly.

And I also see it. It's absurd. It's not blind chance.

Evolution is not something of coming together over billions of years of atoms and molecules accidentally to bring about this beautiful universe. I do not believe that there is no guiding intelligence behind evolution. There is.

That is so obvious when you look at the world and you look at yourself. You know the famous analogy of the monkey and the typewriter? No, I don't.

Oh, they say... The famous analogy? This is to describe what evolution means by people who believe it is blind chance.

It's a mechanical, mechanistic thing that how evolution happened, all chance events. That would mean if you put a monkey at a typewriter, and this monkey is immortal, and this monkey starts hitting the keys of the typewriter and goes on for a billion years or two billion years or longer, they say if evolution as chance development is true, then eventually the monkey is going to produce by chance the works of Shakespeare over a billion years. Right.

It's not going to happen.

[Speaker 2] (1:38:55 - 1:41:36)

Right. I miss that monkey and the typewriter analogy somewhere in my college upbringing. But you see the...

Yes, I see it. I see it. He has a quote.

Bob and Gwen, can we go back to them? This is from somebody named Button 20. Did you see this last week?

No. You don't see the message boards, do you? Actually, she's Joni in Long Beach, actually.

She said, my faith was strong. Oprah, Oprah, Oprah. My faith was strong, but now it's growing stronger and stronger every day.

The words of the Bible, she said, are just jumping out at me. How could I have not seen them so clearly before? Like, be still and know that I am God.

I will not leave you alone. I will always be with you. This book, New Earth, has put into words what I've always felt from within.

As a Catholic, I can describe my faith very simply. It's based on the Holy Trinity, which is in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. That's it in a nutshell.

The rest of the Bible is just the history lesson as to how all that came about. To say it another way, God created the world, saw what a mess we were making, sent his Son down to teach us how to live. Then Jesus said, when he knew he was going to have to leave us, I will ask my Father, and he will give you another advocate, the Holy Spirit, to be with you always, the Spirit of Truth, which the world cannot accept because it neither sees nor knows it, because it remains in you and will be in you.

John 14, 16. And here it is again, she writes. John 14, 26, 27.

The Holy Spirit, that the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all that I have told you. Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you.

Not as the world gives do I give it to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid. And you know what, Oprah?

I got it this time when I read it. I really got it. People wouldn't be so afraid if they only knew that the energy flowing through their very being, which I choose to call the Holy Spirit, is the most fabulous, wireless connection to the most powerful source in the universe, the God that created us.

May God bless you and keep you safe in his grace. You're truly one of his messengers. And that's from Joni of Long Beach, California.

And she ends with, Life is a gift. Live every day as a thank you note. Very good.

Isn't that fantastic? I mean, I just thought this was so fantastic. So I'm happy to share that with you.

That's what one Christian had to say. Okay?

[Speaker 6] (1:41:38 - 1:41:39)

Thank you. It's very nice.

[Speaker 2] (1:41:39 - 1:42:11)

I thought that was great too. Joni of Long Beach. I almost Skyped her this week.

Isn't that perfection? I thought that was perfection. Thanks Gwen and Bob.

Thank you guys. Thank you. Well, shall we continue here?

You say your inner purpose is to awaken. It's as simple as that. You share that purpose with every other person on the planet because it is the purpose of humanity.

So, let's again talk about what it means to awaken. Doesn't the very word purpose imply that you can do something about it? Purpose means on purpose.

[Speaker 1] (1:42:11 - 1:42:13)

That's right. I asked that question.

[Speaker 2] (1:42:13 - 1:42:16)

You say you can't make it happen that it is an act of grace, this awakening.

[Speaker 1] (1:42:16 - 1:42:47)

Yes, and what I talk about is the first moment of awakening. It happens or it doesn't happen. The first moment, which is the disidentification from the stream of thinking and the arising.

It might only be a glimpse at first. The arising of awareness. You're suddenly becoming aware that there is a realm.

Underneath thinking, there's a realm of stillness inside you. You touch it. Maybe you're out in nature and suddenly, as you did when you were on the mountaintop.

[Speaker 2] (1:42:47 - 1:42:56)

Oh, I had another one. You know what? I had another one just Friday.

This is going to be on this Friday. But this past Friday, I was at Tom Cruise's house. You know Tom Cruise.

[Speaker 1] (1:42:57 - 1:42:57)

Not personally.

[Speaker 2] (1:42:58 - 1:42:58)

Okay.

[Speaker 1] (1:43:02 - 1:43:04)

I know he jumped on your sofa.

[Speaker 2] (1:43:04 - 1:44:41)

Oh, you even know that. Okay. You even know that.

Okay. We're going to talk about that. Now I'm jumping on his.

I'm going to give him a chance to jump on his. Anyway, Tom Cruise lives in the... I could cry just thinking about it.

He lives in the most magnificent place I have ever seen, read, heard, or experienced in

my life. I tell you. I drove through his house through this grove of aspen trees for like a half mile before we get to the gate.

He lives at the top of a mountain. The house sits in the center, and you're surrounded by all the mountains of telluride. We went outside through his bedroom to stand on the balcony, and there are all these aspen trees around, and the mountains, and absolute stillness.

Absolute stillness. My eyes started to water. I've never seen anything more beautiful or felt anything so deep, so rich.

Aside from that time I was on my mountain. I said to him, first of all, what it takes to be the kind of person that comes to this, that has that as your space. He's had a lot of things going on in his life, and I said, no matter what, you have this.

You have this place to come to. My God. I felt so filled up when I left from the stillness.

[Speaker 8] (1:44:42 - 1:44:42)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (1:44:43 - 1:44:54)

We stood out on Tom's balcony, and I said, Tom, can you hear the silence? It has its own language. He said, yeah, you're right, it does.

It has its own language.

[Speaker 1] (1:44:55 - 1:44:56)

Was he already aware of it?

[Speaker 2] (1:44:56 - 1:45:15)

No, he was aware of it. He was aware of it, yeah. That was my moment with Tom Cruise.

That you'll get to see. Now, when you see us on television this Friday, you won't get all of that because it's all about the interview and stuff, but I had a spiritual moment with Tom at the top of the mountain.

[Speaker 1] (1:45:15 - 1:47:11)

Yeah. Well, these are wonderful moments of grace, but you don't necessarily need to be in those beautiful places. It's a great act of grace when it happens.

Yeah. But that stillness is primarily an inner dimension, and it can arise anywhere. But sometimes it's good to have experience in there where the environment is most

conducive to experiencing ultimately the inner because if you don't feel it on the inner, you won't really be aware of the silence around you.

That's right. It's only through the inner that you can be aware of the outer silence. So to be aware of silence, how can you be aware of silence?

Only by being still. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Because it's only the stillness in you that is aware of the silence.

If your mind were totally occupied with noisy thinking, you wouldn't even know it's still around you. Or you would say for a moment, oh, it's very still, and then you carry on thinking. Right.

You wouldn't really experience it. So there's the equivalent of outer stillness. This is the outer dimension of spirit.

You can sense the spirit that's out there in nature, but you can only sense it because you already have it within you. It's that in you that responds, that senses it. So only people whose mind is not totally noisy can actually be aware of silence.

And so I sometimes observe, when I go for a walk in the forest every day, and often I see people who are jogging or walking their dogs, and very few are really there. They're talking on the phone, they have headphones on, they're talking to their friends, and all that immersive thinking could be anywhere, in the office.

[Speaker 2] (1:47:12 - 1:47:30)

Right. Someone asked, Eckhart, everything you say in your book resonates with my spirit, so I believe it to be true. However, do people ever ask you how you know all of this?

If so, how do you respond? Where does your knowledge come from? This is Renee in Indianapolis.

Where does your knowledge come from? How do you know what you know?

[Speaker 1] (1:47:31 - 1:48:21)

The essence of it comes through inner realization. In other words, it's by touching the consciousness that one is, that you are. It comes through becoming still and listening for what comes out of the stillness.

It's not primarily based on knowledge, although, of course, I have read spiritual books, quite a few. I use sometimes some of the terminology that is already in existence, has been in existence for a long, long time. But the book is more than just a compilation of other spiritual books that I have read.

The essence of the book is in my own realization. In other words, the answers come by being still. When I write, I sit there with a notepad, a pen, and become still.

[Speaker 2] (1:48:22 - 1:48:22)

Not on a computer?

[Speaker 1] (1:48:23 - 1:48:23)

No.

[Speaker 2] (1:48:23 - 1:48:23)

Okay.

[Speaker 1] (1:48:24 - 1:48:50)

Everything is done by hand. And then I wait for some movement of thought to come out of the stillness. And then gradually a thought formulates itself, and then there is a critical faculty that says, okay, does that make sense?

Sometimes it does, sometimes it doesn't. If it doesn't make sense, I become still again. And then perhaps a thought that is more suited to what I can sense comes up, and then I write it down.

[Speaker 2] (1:48:50 - 1:49:25)

So did you write this book from the place of inner space? Last week we talked about inner space, and I was a little frustrated until the end of the class because I was trying to get this concept of inner space across to all of our viewers and listeners. And at the end of last week's class, as we'd gone off the air here, Eckhart said, I said, remember I said to you I'm a little frustrated?

And you said, because you cannot understand it through concepts and language, that inner space isn't something you can understand with your mind.

[Speaker 1] (1:49:25 - 1:49:42)

No. So as an explanation, it's not very satisfying when one talks about inner stillness and then people try to understand, okay, what's he actually talking about? And you can see already when you're in your head, inner stillness, what's that about?

That doesn't make any sense. Of course it doesn't to the mind.

[Speaker 2] (1:49:42 - 1:49:43)

People say it's all that woo-woo stuff.

[Speaker 1] (1:49:43 - 1:50:06)

Yes, that's what some journalists often say. They come to spirituality and say, oh, it's all that stuff. They don't give themselves a chance.

You really have to give yourself a chance and see whether you can sense in yourself that to which these words point. Yes. And only then does it become real and alive.

[Speaker 2] (1:50:06 - 1:50:40)

And that is the same thing we're saying to Bob and Gwen. When Bob is trying to say, what do you mean by the evolutionary impulse of the universe? What that really means is that when you are in alignment, when your inner purpose is aligned with what you do, that you will be supported by the Spirit of God or by universal energy in such a way that life opens up to you.

And people think, oh, it's about you being lucky or, gee, isn't that strange that this happened or serendipitous things happened. Things fall into line when you are in alignment.

[Speaker 1] (1:50:41 - 1:51:11)

Yes, that they fall into line. That's one way or another. Everybody can experience that.

So why not give it a try? Live as if the present moment were more important than past and future. On a practical level, of course, you still use past and future.

But give your attention to this. Spend a few days or a few weeks living in that way. Immediately surrendering negativity when it arises and recognizing it as ego-based or pain-body based.

[Speaker 2] (1:51:11 - 1:51:14)

Because all negativity is ego-based?

[Speaker 1] (1:51:14 - 1:52:12)

Well, negativity loves ego. It's a denial of life. The moment you identify with negativity, that's part of the ego.

So experiment with... Because you've lived in one particular state of consciousness for many years, try something different and see what happens. And what happens primarily and first of all is an inner shift.

And after a little time gap sometimes, it gets reflected in the outer realm also. But that's no longer the main thing because the main thing is already that you enter that state of peaceful, alive presence in yourself when you're aligned with what is. Aligned with the

now.

And that's what matters. The rest is the icing on the cake. When good things happen to you, it doesn't mean you now feel good because something good has happened to you.

Something good has happened to you because you've already found the goodness within you.

[Speaker 2] (1:52:12 - 1:52:17)

That's right. So you can only manifest that which you already are.

[Speaker 1] (1:52:17 - 1:52:50)

Yes. Yes, you already are that. Whatever people are looking for, whatever form, they already are that.

They're looking for God. And I'm not saying that this form is God. I'm not saying that this person is God.

I'm saying the essence, if you go deep enough within, there is a realm where you and God merge. And it's everybody's destiny and purpose to live from that place of connectedness.

[Speaker 2] (1:52:50 - 1:53:07)

Yes, because the I am, the I am, is I am that which comes from God. Yes. I am that which comes from God.

Laurie lives in New Brunswick, Canada, and she's Skyping us from her family room in St. John. Hello, Laurie.

[Speaker 3] (1:53:08 - 1:53:10)

Hello, Oprah. Hello, Eckhart.

[Speaker 2] (1:53:10 - 1:53:13)

Welcome to our conversation here this evening.

[Speaker 3] (1:53:13 - 1:54:47)

Thank you. It's a pleasure to be here. What do you want to say to us?

I would like to comment on the dialogue on inner purpose that begins on page 262. There are parts of that dialogue, the parts that were written in italics, that could have been me speaking word for word. In fact, those were the reasons that I think I was drawn to the book in the first place.

I turn 38 this summer, and I've had two members of my immediate family die in their mid-30s. So their deaths have left me very keenly aware of the immediacy of my own living and how important it is for me to align my life, however long it shall be, with my inner purpose and to make sure that the relationships that I have with people, my husband and my children especially, are genuine and that I conduct my life from that place of higher consciousness. So my question is, I'm so aware of how important and precious every moment of this human experience is, I don't want to waste a moment of it on anger or resentment or disappointment.

Some days I'm just more conscious than others. So I ask Eckhart, do you believe that two people can actually live in an intimate relationship with one another, either as partners or as parent and child, without wanting from one another? And do two people have to be at the same place in their spiritual awakening for this to happen?

[Speaker 1] (1:54:49 - 1:57:59)

Thank you. Thank you. Good question.

Now when I say without wanting, what I mean of course is without saying, I want you, you are my property, you must not leave me, otherwise I will get extremely angry. I'm not saying that you might not say to your partner, I want you to take out the garbage because I took it out yesterday. On a practical level, there may be some wanting.

So the question is, can two people live together without that deep psychological wanting that wants to cling to the other person, says fulfill me or make me happy, don't you dare leave me. That, right, that is the question. But I would like to change the question a little bit from can two people, because you cannot be responsible for somebody else, ask yourself the question, can I live with my partner or whoever without bringing in this unconscious energy of wanting which comes from the ego?

Can I live with a person like that? Because it only requires really one person to go through this shift in consciousness. So only you can really answer the question and it's not an abstract question, it's a question that you can only apply to the present moment, to really answer it as a live question rather than an abstract thing whether can people live in fully conscious together is an abstract question.

A more powerful and a more vital question is can I? And even that not for the rest of my life, not like that, no, now. So you bring, to find the answer, a vital answer that is true for you, you have to remember that question as you live, situations arise in your relationship, see at this moment, can I be free of that egoic wanting and needing?

And if you cannot be free at this moment of this egoic wanting and needing and because you cannot be free, negativity arises, because the partner is not responding to the wanting and needing or isn't even there, hasn't come home yet, whatever, then this is

your chance again to be aware, as I meant to the other questioner a little earlier on, this is your chance to become aware of the ego in you as the wanting.

So even if the answer can I be free of wanting is no, obviously I can't because there is still wanting in me, then at least you are able to recognize the ego and that means how are you able to recognize the ego? You are becoming aware. And only when you dwell in awareness in your relationship can you be free of those unconscious movements.

[Speaker 2] (1:57:59 - 1:58:33)

Yeah, I think that wanting that you're talking about is wanting you to be a certain way to help fill me up. Yes. That's what he's talking about, not in terms of practical, I need you to pick up the laundry, I want you to pick up the milk, I want you to, that's very different than I want you to be what I want you to be so that you make me whole.

You know that whole, you know, Tom Cruise as a matter of fact, Jerry Maguire line, you complete me, wanting somebody to complete you is what he's talking about because nobody can.

[Speaker 3] (1:58:34 - 1:59:04)

Yes, I think I misinterpreted that as being wanting, you know, wanting recognition from your spouse or wanting gratitude or wanting respect or things like that. And I couldn't quite figure out how you live in an intimate relationship without wanting those things. And for me, in our, we have a busy household.

We have five little boys all under the age of nine. There's always somebody wanting something around here.

[Speaker 2] (1:59:04 - 1:59:08)

Where are you, in a closed off room somewhere? With the door locked?

[Speaker 3] (1:59:08 - 1:59:12)

I am, and it's also 10 o'clock, so they're all in bed.

[Speaker 2] (1:59:12 - 1:59:12)

Okay.

[Speaker 3] (1:59:13 - 1:59:47)

But for me, I think, and you've talked a lot about people having their own spiritual practice. And I guess for me right now, it's living amidst the chaos of the day and not getting mired down in the muck of the daily routine and being able to stay above that, being unflappable and keeping that sense of inner peace, even though it's a little bit

chaotic in the immediate surrounding.

[Speaker 2] (1:59:48 - 1:59:50)

Right, with five boys under nine. Oh, my God.

[Speaker 1] (1:59:50 - 2:00:43)

It's a noisy house. Yeah, a good practice here is not wanting this moment to be different from the way it is. Just this moment.

That's where you relinquish the wanting. That is the main relinquishment or letting go of wanting. Not wanting this moment, and it's always this moment, to be different.

So if the children are screaming and there's mayhem, that's what is. And then you deal with what is. But not the internal rejection of what is.

So not wanting really deep down is not wanting this moment. This moment may come in the form of a person, your partner, the children. At this moment, this is what is.

And not wanting this moment to be different from the way it is. Then you are aligned. And then you act.

You take action. You can tell them, stop doing that. But internally, you are free.

You're not reacting internally.

[Speaker 2] (2:00:43 - 2:01:02)

Well, what about what Laurie was saying about wanting recognition? Not just from your spouse. A lot of people, you do things and you want people to recognize that you've done.

To be, you know, I don't know, admired or, you know, receive affection in your relationship. Is that your ego?

[Speaker 1] (2:01:03 - 2:01:35)

It often is. But if you believe that the world is withholding from you, I say that somewhere in the book. Yes, you say that.

Give what you think people owe you. Give it. And then you see a reciprocal movement.

Not even necessarily from the very same people you're giving it to. But the universe reciprocates. If you give recognition, gratitude, whatever it is, you give it out.

Even to strangers. Recognition, a smile, giving. So there's a flow of energy.

[Speaker 2] (2:01:35 - 2:01:43)

Because what you give out, what you put out is going to come back always. Always, always, always. That's a universal law.

Thank you, Laurie.

[Speaker 3] (2:01:44 - 2:01:44)

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (2:01:45 - 2:01:48)

Thank you for your moment of calm with the five boys.

[Speaker 3] (2:01:48 - 2:01:51)

I'm going to miss this on Monday night.

[Speaker 2] (2:01:51 - 2:01:55)

Well, thank you very much. Is this your time for yourself?

[Speaker 3] (2:01:55 - 2:02:01)

This is. Yeah, it's great. We work hard to carve out those moments of stillness around here.

[Speaker 2] (2:02:02 - 2:02:27)

Well, we're going to continue with something we call the Soul Series on Monday nights. There's a great, great interview that I've done with Dr. Jill Bolte-Taylor. Her mind actually, as we mentioned last week, she lost the left hemisphere of her brain through a stroke.

And the right hemisphere was still working. So all of the chatter stopped. And she was in bliss.

And she said, even though I was drooling, I was drooling, she was in heaven. She was in bliss.

[Speaker 1] (2:02:28 - 2:02:43)

Yes, I haven't used the terms right and left hemisphere in the book. And I rarely use scientific terms. But that is how she sees it.

I think she's right. That's right. So the right hemisphere is to do with unity of knowing, not conceptual stillness.

[Speaker 2] (2:02:43 - 2:02:45)

She said she felt the connection to all things.

[Speaker 1] (2:02:45 - 2:02:46)

Yes.

[Speaker 2] (2:02:46 - 2:03:35)

Yeah, from the right hemisphere. That's beautiful. So here we are at week nine.

Only one more class to go. And I bet so many people can relate to this. Many people, you say on page 262, who are going through the early stages of awakening, are no longer certain what their outer purpose is.

A woman from Milwaukie, Oregon, just wrote, can you still be 52 years old and be in the same place Ivy was at the beginning of this show, not knowing what you want to do? What drives the world, you say, no longer drives them. Seeing the madness of our civilization so clearly, they may feel somewhat alienated from the culture around them.

So what do you do in this case? If you're at this point in your life where reading this book is shaking you up and you realize more than ever what you don't want to do, you realize I have been on the wrong course. You realize you have an awakening.

Now what do you do? I'm all awakened.

[Speaker 1] (2:03:36 - 2:05:44)

Now what? Well, the awakening, of course, is the realization of your inner purpose primarily. So don't come into conflict with where you are now or what you're doing now.

If you cannot surrender to what you're doing now and be okay with it, at least bring acceptance. We talk about it in the next chapter. At least bring acceptance to whatever you're doing now so that you're okay with it.

That is vital. Then you are in a state of clarity. You enter a state of clarity when you are no longer in opposition to your present moment, life where you live or what you are doing.

If you cannot surrender, if whatever you are doing continues to produce unhappiness in you, and no matter how hard you try, then, of course, it's a clear sign that you need to leave that situation. Right. So either you let go of the resistance and see if you can.

Sometimes people say, No, I can't. But what they really mean is, No, I'm not willing to. Not willing to, which is very different.

You need to see the difference between not being able to and not being willing to. The difference is, whatever applies to you, am I not willing to accept this moment, or am I truly incapable of accepting this moment? If you find you're truly incapable of accepting this moment when you're doing your job or whatever you're doing, then this is a sign that it's time for change.

Got it. Many times you will be able to have this energy flow into what you're doing already and transform how you do perhaps what you've been doing for many years, perhaps in a state of resistance, and suddenly how you do it changes. You're no longer doing it in a state of inner resistance, and then you bring a completely different energy into what you do.

Consciousness flows into what you do. And often, either this is deeply fulfilling and it affects many people around you, or it could also happen that now that you're no longer resisting what you do, change suddenly comes into your life.

[Speaker 2] (2:05:44 - 2:06:14)

I got that. This is a beautiful quote from page 266. You say that the great arises out of small things that are honored and cared for.

Everybody's life really consists of small things. Greatness is a mental abstraction and a favorite fantasy of the ego. The paradox is that the foundation for greatness is honoring the small things of the present moment instead of pursuing the idea of greatness.

Yes. It's that one step.

[Speaker 1] (2:06:15 - 2:08:44)

That's right. So many people have this idea, I want to achieve something great or be somebody great, and they neglect the step that leads to greatness. They don't honor this step at this moment because they have this idea of some future moment where they're going to be great.

And then it's surprising when you truly look at people, perhaps, who you would say have achieved great things, that even in their life it really is a sequence of small steps because every moment is quite small. You are wherever you are at this moment. Some people believe, not to mention you, some people believe I'm doing great work.

I mean, I am because the consciousness is moving through this form. I don't feel personally responsible for what I do as such. But even there, it is small steps.

When the writing happens, there's a notepad and a pen, and there's the present moment and there's the stillness. Very small. There's not some idea, I'm going to create a work that's going to change everybody's consciousness.

No, I'm just true to this moment. This moment requires a blank piece of sheet of paper and a pen and a stillness. It's a small thing.

Or when I give a talk, maybe 2,000 people come. If I had this idea, I'm now going to give an important, big talk that would lead to stress and fear because maybe it's not going to be that great. But with every step being present, the car comes to pick me up.

If you step into the car, then I sit in the car. The car moves towards the venue where the talk is going to be. I look out of the window.

Simple. People walking past, the tree, the sky. Just this moment.

Step out. Sit in the waiting room, the green room to wait for the talk to start. Breathing.

Simple. Nothing big. Just a little moment.

This moment. Being true to that. Then step onto the stage.

There's an empty chair. I sit in it. Still.

Breathe. I know there's 2,000 people there. And I also know I have no idea what's going to come out of this mouth.

Being happy with not knowing. Still. Not big.

It's all small. It's all a sequence of very small moments. And by being true to the small moment, something great arises.

[Speaker 2] (2:08:44 - 2:09:20)

Yeah. And the biggest lesson from tonight is by being true to the small moments, by being true to this moment, it means to bring the sense of presence, the sense of consciousness to every single moment so that everything that you do is fueled from a deeper level than your ego. Everything you do is fueled from a deeper level than your thoughts.

That everything you do is fueled from your being, and that is what gives meaning and purpose to whatever you do. Yes. That's the essence.

[Speaker 1] (2:09:20 - 2:09:27)

Yes. Right. It's wonderful to see you when the power comes through.

You talk. It's beautiful. The words are so true.

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (2:09:28 - 2:11:14)

Thank you, everybody. I want to thank you for joining us tonight. As I said, next week will be our last class on A New Earth, the finale, but we don't want the discussion to end there.

Please join me on Monday, May 12th, for the start of my Soul Series just to continue this conversation. For those of you who've been enjoying these webcasts here on Oprah.com, for the first time we'll be broadcasting the videotaped sessions of my XM radio show. It's where I get to talk to spiritual teachers.

I've been doing that for a couple of years now. I talk to spiritual teachers, thinkers, and scholars about my favorite subject, the evolution of the soul. People like Dr. Joe Bolte-Taylor, Wayne Dyer, Elizabeth Lesser, Jon Kabat-Zinn, Byron Katie, Sarah Bonbronick, Kathy Freston, and others. So keep Monday nights at 8 p.m. reserved for Oprah.com. If you can, get away from the five noisy boys, whatever's going on in your life. Tonight's class will be available on demand tomorrow for free here at Oprah.com.

And if you want to download or watch any of our classes, you can do that tomorrow also at Oprah.com and iTunes. It's free because of the generous support of nature-made soft gel vitamins. This week you can update your workbook and get ready for our last class, Chapter 10, A New Earth, How to Bring Awareness to Every Moment of Your Life.

There really is no higher calling. We're going to go for two hours next week for the benefit of wrapping up all the things we've been talking about these past 10 weeks. This was great.

Thank you. This was a good class. Thank you.

We'll see you at number 10, coming up, number 10. Bye, everybody. Thanks for your message boards.

Wasn't this great?